

STAFF REPORT
FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2007

TO: David Jinkens, City Manager
FR: Nancy Jones, Purchasing Manager
DT: January 10, 2007

RE: Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Adopt a Resolution Updating the Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy.

ISSUE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION:

Set forth in Resolution No. 1998-71, the City's Expense Reimbursement Policy for City Travel was last reviewed and adopted by the City Council on September 15, 1998. Given the passage of time since then, combined with the recent adoption of AB1234 (which sets expense requirements for elected and advisory body members), it is timely to review the policy again. The State's requirements make sense; and in many cases, simply provide an opportunity to better document existing practices.

While AB 1234 only applies to Council and advisory body members, it is appropriate to extend its provisions for travel, meeting and meal costs to all City employees. As such, instead of adopting separate guidelines just for Council members, the revised guidelines apply to all City employees.

Outlined below are allowable expenses, government and group transportation and lodging rates, sponsored lodging costs, receipts, meal guidelines, local meeting and training costs, and a final version of the policy.

Allowable Expenses

AB1234 requires that travel guidelines need to articulate allowable expenses. The proposed policy update includes the following guidelines for reimbursable activities:

- 1) Communicating with representatives of regional, state, and national government on City adopted policy positions.
- 2) Serving on professional organization or governmental committees, boards or task forces.
- 3) Attending educational seminars, conferences or organized educational activities designed to improve skill levels or provide information on topics important to City policy and operations.
- 4) Preparing research for City projects or implementing adopted City plans, policies, goals, or programs.

- 5) Attending meetings involving activities or decisions important to City interests, consistent with adopted plans, policies, goals or programs.
- 6) Attending events where the City is a formal sponsor or participant, or in performance of official duties for the City.
- 7) Communicating with individuals or representatives of community groups on policy positions adopted by or under consideration by the City.
- 8) Recognizing volunteer or employee service to the City.
- 9) Engaging in other business related activities with a direct connection to the implementation of adopted City plans, policies, goals or programs.
- 10) Miscellaneous expenses will be reimbursed at actual cost. Such items are limited to costs directly related to the travel and do not include items viewed as personal in nature (i.e., in-room television or movie costs, laundry services, and lodging costs in private homes).

Authorized Travel and Reporting Requirements

Annually: Each department, commission, board or task force must submit a training and travel plan with its proposed budget, as is current practice. City Manager and City Council approval during each fiscal year budget process represents proper prior approval for travel related expenses.

For each travel occurrence: Prior approval by appropriate approving official (See Pg. 10, Delegating Authority for Granting Required Approvals...) is required in all of the following areas:

1. Overnight Travel
2. Air Travel
3. Travel Advances
4. Use of Rental Cars
5. Use of Private Car on Out-of-Town Business

Government or Group Transportation and Lodging Rates

AB 1234 requires that the legislative body "use government and group rates offered by a provider of transportation or lodging services for travel and lodging when available." This has always been the City's practice, but we have formalized this in the guidelines as follows:

1. In the section addressing travel costs for commercial carriers:

It is the City's policy to use discounted government or sponsoring group rates for transportation whenever these are offered and available.

2. In the section regarding the need to make adequate advance reservations:

Additionally, you should also ask about any discounted government or group rates; and use them if they are offered and available.

Sponsored Lodging Costs

AB1234 requires that "lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum group rate published by the conference or activity sponsor." This has always been the City's practice, but AB 1234 provides the opportunity to formalize it. Accordingly, the following policy has been added to the proposed update:

When conference or training sponsors have made arrangements for lodging, you should stay at one of these facilities and the cost should not exceed the maximum group rate published by them. In the event that rooms are not available at one of these facilities, you should stay at a comparable facility at a comparable cost, not to exceed the maximum group rate published by the sponsor, whenever possible.

Receipts

The City's current policy allows employees and officials a per meal allowance for meals that are not provided as part of the seminar, meeting, travel, etc. they are attending. AB 1234 requires that itemized receipts be submitted for all expenses. Accordingly, the proposed update says:

Itemized Receipts must be submitted for all expenses. In the event that receipts are not available, you must provide a written explanation of the circumstances as to why this is the case and reason you incurred this expense. (This most certainly should be the exception, not the rule).

Meal Guidelines

AB 1234 requires that the City either adopt "reasonable" reimbursement rates or use rates adopted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). On one hand, there are several advantages in simply adopting the IRS meal allowance by reference. However, in researching this, IRS rates not only vary by State, but by regions within each state as well. For California alone, there are 49 distinct reimbursement amounts, varying by region or season. Managing reimbursements and ensuing compliance with these amounts (which are subject to periodic change) would present significant administrative challenges.

As such, we recommend continuing with our current policy of setting reasonable reimbursement rates in our travel and meeting policy. On the other hand, we have not modified our rates for approximately nine years, and modification is warranted simply to account for the passage of time.

In this case, IRS guidelines are helpful in assessing a reasonable adjustment. The following summarizes current IRS daily meal allowance for the regions in California most frequently traveled by City employees and officials, as of January 2007:

Los Angeles	\$64	San Francisco	\$64
Monterey	\$64	Sacramento	\$59
San Diego	\$64	San Jose	\$59

As reflected above, these range from \$59 to \$64, for a "mid-range" of about \$62 per day before tip. While the City's current policy is not set on a "per day" basis, but per meal, the comparable total is \$36 per day. Accordingly, we recommend the following change in the City's meal guidelines:

Meal	Current Allowance	Proposed Allowance, Including Gratuity
Breakfast	\$7.50	\$12.00
Lunch	\$10.00	\$17.00
Dinner	\$18.50	\$35.00
TOTAL	\$36.00	\$64.00

As noted above, these are not daily, but per meal guidelines; and itemized receipts must be submitted for all meal costs. **Any costs above the new proposed meal allowance with tip consideration of fifteen percent (15%), will be the responsibility of the traveling City employee or official. Any costs below the new proposed meal allowance with a 15% tip consideration, will be reimbursed to the City by the traveling City employee or official within ten (10) working days of return from travel.**

It is further recommended that the City Manager be granted the authority to make reasonable adjustments to meal cost allocations justified based upon annual changes in the IRS guidelines noted above.

Local Meeting and Training Costs

The City's existing guidelines address reimbursements for local meeting and meal costs. However, as part of our comprehensive evaluation of our current policies (aside from those required by AB 1234), we have concluded that more policy guidance in this area is warranted.

Accordingly, we recommend the following addition:

1. *Meals not incurred as part of out-of-area or overnight travel are limited to activities outside of normal duties, such as business-related meeting held before or after regular working hours (including working lunches where this is the only time available) or extended overtime due to special projects or emergencies.*
2. *Meal reimbursements are not allowed as part of routine daily work assignments or training within City limits, unless part of the registration cost or the meal is served on site as part of the program to keep all participants together and not have them disperse for meals.*
3. *Meals incurred during training held outside the City limits are only allowable when the training (including travel time) spans to normal meal periods.*

For example, if training is held outside of the City limits from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. at a location that is an hour away from the City, meal costs for lunch would not be reimbursable. However, meal costs for lunch under similar circumstances where the training is held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. would be reimbursable.

4. *Reimbursements for meal costs in these circumstances are subject to the City's meal cost guidelines for overnight travel.*

Final Version of the Policy

To facilitate the Council's review of the proposed policy update, a copy of our existing resolution containing expense reimbursement policy for City travel is included in Attachment "B" of this staff report.

Summary

Given the almost nine years that have passed since the City Council last reviewed the City's expense reimbursement policy for City travel, and the goal of meeting mandatory AB 1234 requirements for Council members in an organization-wide context, the proposed changes are recommended for Council implementation.

FINANCIAL and/or POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

The only anticipated impact associated with implementing this revised policy may be slightly higher meal costs for employee and official travel due to recommended increases to meal per diem rates. Department budgets will still be expected to stay within Council approved line items for travel related expenses for the 2006/2007 fiscal budget year. This policy will further ensure prudent use of public resources.

Nancy S. Jones, C.P.M., Purchasing Manager

I concur with this report: _____
Christine Vuletich, Director of Finance

Approved by: _____
David Jinkens, City Manager

cc: Catherine DiCamillo, City Attorney
Suzie Alessi, City Clerk

Attachments: Resolution Updating the City's Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy

Exhibit "A" Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy

Exhibit "B" Current Resolution Adopting Expense Reimbursement Policy for City Travel

CITY OF SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**RESOLUTION UPDATING THE FINANCIAL
MEETING AND TRAVEL POLICY**

WHEREAS, the City of South Lake Tahoe desires to update the Financial Management Policy covering travel by City employees and public officials; and

WHEREAS, the staff recommends the attached policy, pages 6 – 22, be accepted as the official meeting and travel policy.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of South Lake Tahoe that the policy be approved.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of South Lake Tahoe at a meeting on February 20, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES: _____

NOES: _____

ABSENT: _____

ABSTAIN: _____

ATTEST:

Susan Alessi, City Clerk

Kathay Lovell, Mayor

EXHIBIT "A"

**CITY OF SOUTH LAKE TAHOE
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
MEETING AND TRAVEL POLICY**

OVERVIEW

These guidelines establish the basic policies and procedures for travel on City business or attendance at meetings by all employees and officials. Everyone who travels or attends meetings for City business purposes (or supervises someone who does) is responsible for knowing and following these guidelines.

This policy is organized into the following eight sections:

1. General Standards
2. Allowable Expenses
3. Planning an Official Trip
4. Travel Authorizations
5. Making the Trip
6. Incurring Non-Travel Expenses
7. Accounting for Expenses
8. Completing Travel Authorizations and Expense Reports

The key document in the administrative process is the Travel/Expense Advances & Reimbursements "TEAR" form. Besides ensuring that travel by City employees and officials is conducted in accordance with these guidelines, the "TEAR" form summarizes the total cost of attending conferences, meetings, and seminars and provides documentation for cash advances, vendor payments and credit card purchases. General instructions for completing and processing this form are also included in these guidelines.

Adoption and Implementation. The City Council is responsible for adopting the City's Meetings and Travel Policy and for approving any significant policy revisions to it. The City Manager, or his/her designee, is responsible for developing administrative procedures as needed to implement this policy. In this role, the City Manager is authorized to make minor administrative changes in the guidelines as long as they are intended to carry out the purpose of this policy and will not have any significant policy impacts.

1. GENERAL STANDARDS

This policy does not require you to take a bus, stay in a cheap motel or eat only in fast food restaurants. A bus or a train may cost less than a plane, but the added time away from work may make these slower options more expensive to the City overall. The meal allowances established in this policy allows you to eat in moderately priced restaurants.

In all areas, not just economy, you are responsible for exercising good judgment in requesting, arranging and making a trip. It should be thoroughly planned, well in advance. You should not mix personal business with official business if it will cost the City anything in dollars or lost time, or if it will harm the City's interests in any way.

This policy is not intended to address every issue, exception or contingency that may arise in the course of City travel or attendance at meetings. Accordingly, the basic standard that should always prevail is to exercise good judgment in the use and stewardship of the City's resources.

2. ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Expenses incurred in connection with the following activities generally constitute authorized expenses, as long as the other guidelines of this policy are met, including good judgment in the use and stewardship of the City's resources.

1. Communicating with representatives of regional, state and national government on City adopted policy positions.
2. Serving on professional organization or governmental committees, boards or task forces.
3. Attending educational seminars, conferences or organized educational activities designed to improve skill levels or provide information on topics important to City policy and operations.
4. Preparing research for City projects or implementing adopted City plans, policies, goals or programs.
5. Attending meetings involving activities or decisions important to City interests, consistent with adopted plans, policies, goals or programs.
6. Attending events where the City is a formal sponsor or participant, or in performance of official duties for the City.
7. Communicating with individuals or representatives of community groups on policy positions adopted by or under consideration by the City.
8. Recognizing volunteer or employee service to the City.
9. Engaging in other business related activities with a direct connection to the implementation of adopted City plans, policies, goals or programs.

3. PLANNING AN OFFICIAL TRIP

How will you travel?

When planning the transportation portion of your trip, you should consider all aspects of cost to the City; daily expenses, overtime, lost work time, as well as actual transportation costs. In general, commercial carrier (such as plane) is the preferred mode of transportation when you are traveling any type of long distance to reach your destination. In these types of situations, you should use an airplane unless there is a valid reason for using private transportation. For example, use of a City vehicle, especially if two or more employees or officials are traveling together, may be less expensive for travel within the State. However, as noted above, the increased time for automobile transportation, and the potential for lost work time, overtime, or increased lodging costs, should be considered in determining the best mode of transportation.

Transportation at Your Destination - If you need local transportation at your destination, use of public transit such as intercity buses, streetcars and Bart is appropriate: the City will advance funds to you for these expenses if you have an estimate of what they might be prior to traveling. The City will also advance or reimburse funds you for taxis when public transit or other commercial carriers are not reasonably available. If a car rental will be required, attach a print out from the most reasonably priced rental car company so that the City may include this dollar amount in your travel advance check.

Air Travel - All air travel on City business should be coach class. You should shop airline carriers prior to making your reservations to ensure that the most competitive rates are available to the City. Southwest Airlines is a good place to start, as they have both reasonable rates and multiple flights to most travel destinations.

Traveling by Automobile - If you will be driving, you should use a City vehicle if one is available. You may request reimbursement for gasoline, etc. when you return. If a City vehicle is not available, or there is another reason why you should drive your personal car, you may do so with the approval of the appropriate approving official as outlined on page 10. You will be reimbursed at the currently approved per mile rate. (2007 IRS Mileage rate is \$.485 per mile) For those City employees and officials that have the authority to use their personal vehicles while conducting City business, a mileage log is included in this policy. This log must accompany all mileage reimbursement requests for documentation purposes. You may use third party internet sources such as "Yahoo Maps" in determining mileage advances or reimbursements.

Government or Group Rates - It is the City's policy to use discounted government or sponsoring group rates for transportation whenever these are offered and available.

To drive a privately owned vehicle on City business you must:

1. Possess a valid license to drive in California.
2. Carry liability insurance limits required by Risk Management with the City named as additional insured.
3. Realize that any damage to the car, needed service or repair occurring on the trip will be your responsibility, as these costs are included in the City's per mile cost reimbursement.

Mileage in-Lieu of Commercial Carrier Costs - In the event that a commercial carrier such as an airplane would otherwise be the preferred mode of transportation, but you prefer to use a personal car instead (subject to the approval guidelines set forth above), you will not be reimbursed more than the commercial carrier cost.

When will you go? By what route?

You should schedule your trip so that you leave at the latest reasonable hour and still arrive at your destination on time. You should also return promptly when your business is finished, thereby minimizing the time away from work and ensuring full reimbursement of all related expenses. You should generally take the most direct and commonly traveled routes. Other routes may be authorized when official business requires their use. If you take an indirect route or stop along the way for personal reasons, the City will not reimburse you for related expenses.

What about compensation for travel time?

When travel time exceeds your normal work week, and if your operating MOU provides, the City's rules for overtime apply. In determining overtime compensation, normal commute time should be deducted from the total travel time. Additionally, normal unpaid meal periods are not considered work time when you are traveling. Overtime eligibility applies equally to drivers and passengers, and should be granted whether the travel occurs during normal workdays, weekends or evenings.

Where will you stay?

The City will pay for a single room (including taxes and parking) for as many nights as necessary. The accommodations you use should be economical but practical. For example, it is preferable to stay at the hotel where a conference is held, even if that hotel may be slightly more expensive than others in the area. Location is also important: a hotel close to where you will be conducting business may be slightly more expensive than outlying hotels, but it may be easier to achieve the City's travel goals by staying at the closer location. In general, you should stay at the most reasonably priced accommodations available consistent with the purpose and goals of your travel.

If you have a question about using a particular hotel, obtain concurrence or direction from your department/division head before making a reservation.

Should you make reservations?

Whenever possible, you should make reservations for your travel plans. These are often required for professional conferences. Designated department or division procurement card holders may use their City credit card number to confirm reservations. Be sure to cancel any reservations you will not be able to use. If the City is charged for an unused reservation, you will pay that charge unless circumstances requiring cancellation were reasonably beyond your control, and approved by your Approving Official and/or the City Manager. When making lodging reservations, be sure to ask about exemptions from the local transient occupancy tax (TOT): some cities exempt travelers on City business, others don't. If there is an exemption, you can save up to 15% on lodging costs depending on the local TOT rate. Almost all lodging operators will require an official, written claim for exemption. A sample of our Hotel/Motel Transient Occupancy Tax Waiver Exemption Certificate for Government Agencies form is provided within this policy and is also available as a word file in the Finance Public Folder in Outlook.

Additionally, you should also ask about any discounted government or group rates; and use them if they are offered and available.

Sponsored Conferences and Training

When conference or training sponsors have made arrangements for lodging, you should stay at one of these facilities and the cost should not exceed the maximum group rate published by them.

In the event that rooms are not available at one of these facilities, you should stay at a comparable facility at a comparable cost, not to exceed the maximum group rate published by the sponsor, whenever possible.

Meal Receipts and Tipping

When submitting documentation for meal expenses, employee must provide itemized receipts. In special circumstances when credit cards are used, both the itemized meal receipt as well as the point of sale transaction slip must be provided.

Tipping is allowable if within the per diem amount allowed for each meal and should be kept to a maximum of 15%. If you would like to tip an additional amount out of your own pocket, that of course is acceptable.

4. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS

The City's Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement "TEAR" form is required whenever the total estimated travel cost will exceed \$50 or overnight accommodations will be required. Otherwise, credit cards or the City's standard voucher system may be used to request vendor payments or expense reimbursements.

Approving Official approval of the "TEAR" form is required, and out-of-state travel requires the further approval of the City Manager. The first column of the completed "TEAR" form and accompanying voucher requests should be submitted to your approving official as far in advance as possible. The second column of the "TEAR" will be used when you return to account for your actual travel expenses.

Delegation of authority for granting required approvals is as follows:

1. The Director of Finance approves for: City Manager

2. The City Manager approves for: Employees Directly Reporting to City Manager
Department Heads
Elected Officials
Appointed Officials
Task Force Members
3. Department Heads approve for: Division Managers
City Employees
4. Division Managers approve for: City Employees

The Approving Official approving "TEAR" forms are responsible for determining that the cost is reasonable and justified by the trip's purpose. They should be certain that:

1. The purpose cannot be accomplished by mail or telephone.
2. The seminar, meeting or conference is necessary to accomplish key City goals and objectives and is unavailable locally if overnight accommodations are required.
3. The minimum number of City staff members will be going.
4. The itinerary ensures accomplishment of the purpose at the lowest reasonable cost.
5. The traveler understands and follows these guidelines.
6. There is enough money in the appropriate travel budget to cover the costs.

Ultimately, the responsibility for following these guidelines and exercising good judgment in the use and stewardship of the City's resources rest with each City employee and official incurring travel, meeting or meal costs on City business.

Requests for Cash in Advance and Payments to Vendors

The City will pay all legitimate expenses of your trip or meeting. These include transportation, lodging, registration fees, meals and any other related expenses such as parking, baggage handling, bridge tolls and telephone costs if they are for official business and fit within this policy.

There are three ways to pay for travel expenses: direct vendor payments, cash advances/reimbursements and credit cards. Direct vendor payments are made by the City to an organization to pay for specific costs related to a trip, usually registration fees, lodging and airfare. Cash advances are lump sum payments made to you before you leave to cover expenses as they arise on the trip; and reimbursements either to or from the City, are processed within ten (10) working days after your travel is completed.

If you request a cash advance, your Approving Official must review the amount to be sure it is reasonable. When you return, you must account for all expenses you incurred, and return the unused portion of the advance. You will be reimbursed the difference if the actual, authorized expenses you incurred exceed the amount advanced.

To obtain either direct vendor payments or a cash advance, you must complete the appropriate sections of the Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement "TEAR" form and attach payment

vouchers for all payments (including cash advances). You should retain a copy of the completed "TEAR" because you will need it when you return to reconcile and account for your actual expenses.

Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement Forms – The "TEAR" Form is available in Purchasing's Central Store in the Administrative Center at the Lake Tahoe Airport, or in the Finance Department Public Folder in Outlook.

5. MAKING THE TRIP

There are two key "golden rules" to remember about making an official trip:

1. Keep it official.
2. Keep records for all expenses.

Keeping It Official

If you take time away from official business for personal matters, or if you delay your return after completing your business, you will not be reimbursed for expenses incurred during that time. When combining business and personal travel in this manner, pre-approval is required. If this extended period occurs during your regular scheduled work hours, the time will be counted as vacation, comp time (if applicable and/or available) or leave without pay.

If you become sick and must delay your return, you will be reimbursed for your additional living expenses (except those directly related to your illness, such as physician or hospital costs) until you are able to return home. You should notify your supervisor or approving official as soon as possible if you become ill. If applicable, the time will be counted as sick leave if it occurs during your normally scheduled work hours, and the City's normal sick leave rules will apply.

And lastly, all expenses must be incurred in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this policy.

Keeping Records for All Expenses

As discussed in Section 7 of this policy, *Accounting for Expenses*, you must maintain a detailed record of all expenses incurred during your travel: meals, transportation/mileage, lodging, baggage handling, car rentals, parking fees, registration fees, telephone (including reasonable calls to communicate home) and any other reasonable and necessary expenses. Itemized receipts must be submitted for all expenses.

In the event that receipts are not available, you must provide a written explanation of the circumstances as to why this is the case and reason you incurred this expense.

Meal Guidelines

The following amounts (including beverages, taxes and gratuities) are allowed for meals:

Breakfast	\$12.00
Lunch	\$17.00
Dinner	\$35.00

As noted above, itemized receipts are required for all meal costs. If actual amount of the meal is less than the allowed amount, the City must be reimbursed for any advance. If higher, the additional cost will be borne by the City employee or official.

Any reimbursements exceeding these allowances require approval by your approving official. If meals are provided without charge at a meeting or while in transit (meals served on a plane, for example), meal costs will not be reimbursed.

6. INCURRING NON-TRAVEL EXPENSES

Special Events - The City will reimburse expenses incurred for such meetings and hospitality as may, from time to time, be determined by the Council to be appropriate. Costs for such special occasions will be determined by specific Council action authorizing such events.

Local Meeting and Training Costs - The City will also reimburse expenses you incur in attending meetings or conferences held locally which do not include travel expenditures, subject to the following guidelines:

Meals not incurred as part of out-of-area or overnight travel are limited to activities outside of normal duties, such as business related meetings held before or after regular working hours (including working lunches where this is the only time available), extended overtime due to special projects or emergencies or an official business event.

Meal reimbursements are not allowed as part of routine daily work assignments or training within City limits, unless part of the registration cost or the meal is served on-site as part of the program to keep all participants together and not have them disperse for meals.

Meals incurred during training held outside the City limits are only allowable when the training (including travel time) spans the normal meal period.

For example, if training is held outside of the City limits from 9:00 until 11:00 AM at a location that is an hour away from the City, meal costs for lunch would not be reimbursable. However, meal costs for lunch under similar circumstances where the training is held from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM would be reimbursable.

Reimbursement for meal costs in these circumstances are subject to the City's meal cost guidelines for overnight travel.

Staff Meetings - On occasion, department/division heads or your approving official may find it beneficial to schedule working lunches to facilitate project planning, staff meetings, accommodation of interview panels, etc. that are better accomplished away from the office. In such cases, it shall be at the discretion of the manager to use City funds, within reason, to conduct business as long as operating department or division budget(s) are available to do so.

Interagency Meetings - As with the above mentioned staff meetings, it may also be appropriate and beneficial to schedule a working breakfast or lunch to discuss items of mutual interest to multiple agencies. Examples of such meetings may be between the City and South Tahoe Public Utility District, the Lake Tahoe Unified School District, the CTC, etc. to promote cooperative efforts that benefit the agencies involved and/or the local community as a whole. As long as funds are spent conservatively and within budget, these opportunities are appropriate uses of City funds.

Other Expenses -- Subject to your approving official, the City will reimburse you for costs incurred while at a meeting or other function when such costs are directly linked to the program or subject matter of the meeting. Examples of costs that may be borne by the City include printed materials, tapes or other training material that may be available for sale at the meeting.

Alcoholic Beverages

City funds should not be used to purchase alcohol or reimburse employees for alcohol related costs. Employee should ask for a separate personal tab for all alcohol related expenses. The City Council may approve exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis for special receptions or other unique circumstances. This discretion applies primarily to non-travel related expenditures such as special receptions, and not to routine travel or meetings by City employees.

Spouses and Guests

In the spirit of encouraging ride sharing, spouses and guests are welcome to accompany you on business travel and at conferences, seminars and meetings as long as a personal vehicle is used.

Guests As Passengers in City Vehicle

Due to liability concerns, non-City employees or officials, including spouses, children and guests should not ride as passengers in City vehicles. Exceptions to this policy include occasions as specifically approved by the City Council.

7. ACCOUNTING FOR EXPENSES

When you return from your trip or official function, a final accounting of all expenses must be approved by your approving official or department head and submitted to Accounts Payable within ten working days. An expense report is required in all cases, whether the advance and actual expenses are equal, you are eligible for additional reimbursement or you owe money to the City.

The final accounting is made by completing the REIMBURSEMENT section on the second column (right hand side) of the "TEAR" form. After completing this section, you should attach itemized receipts, sign the report attesting to its accuracy and submit it to your approving official for review and approval.

A completed "TEAR" form is required for the employee's or official's vendor file, even when a trip does not have an advance or reimbursement because all payments were made via direct voucher or credit card.

Approving Official approving expense reports are responsible for ensuring that:

1. All expenses are reasonable, necessary and consistent with this policy.
2. Any required itemized receipts are attached.
3. The final disposition is correct (balance due employee; balance due City).
4. Any amounts due to the City are reimbursed.
5. Final accounting of all expenses is submitted to Finance.

Upon approval by your approving official, the expense report should be processed as follows depending on these circumstances:

If the City Owes You

The reimbursement side of the "TEAR" form must be forwarded to Finance with the amount due to you highlighted within ten (10) working days of return from travel; upon Finance Department review, the reimbursement will be processed on the next possible accounts payable demand.

If You Owe the City

The reimbursement side of the "TEAR" form should be forwarded to Finance along with payment for the amount due from you the City employee or City official, highlighted within ten (10) working days of return from travel.

Processing Related Vouchers

All travel related costs require payments to vendors via vouchers, whether it is direct payments to vendor (such as to the conference provider for registration or hotel for lodging), credit payment or reimbursements to employees. To ensure appropriate documentation for all such payments, copies of the "TEAR" form must accompany all vouchers as follows:

1. ***Vouchers Processed Before Travel Occurs*** - The ADVANCE section of the "TEAR" form, must be attached to all related vouchers.
2. ***Vouchers Processed After Travel Occurs*** - The REIMBURSEMENT section of the "TEAR" form must be attached to all related vouchers.

Note: When City Manager approval is required, documentation of this must also be attached to all related vouchers.

8. COMPLETING MEETING AND TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORMS

The following charts and tables provide an overview of the City's travel procedures, instructions for completing the Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement form and sample forms.

STEP 1 – TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

WHO	WHAT
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Traveler	Consult with your Approving Official on the need for travel. Plan itinerary, transportation & lodging Complete Travel/Expense Advances & Reimbursement "TEAR" form; attach vouchers for employee cash advance (if needed) and each direct vendor payment requested.
Approving Official	Review "TEAR" form for conformance with City travel policy and department priorities. Verify that adequate funding exists in the appropriate travel budget to cover all costs. Approve "TEAR" form, provide a copy to employee and submit to Finance for payment processing.
Finance	Review for accuracy, signatures and appropriate documentation. Make cash advance and vendor payments. File "TEAR" form in employee's or official's vendor file.

STEP 2 – EXPENSE REPORTING

WHO	WHAT
Traveler	Complete and submit expense side of "TEAR" form accounting for all expenses to your Approving Official within 10 working days after completion of travel. Sign report attesting to its accuracy. Attach all itemized receipts and send to Accounts Payable in Finance. If traveler owes the City, send payment to A/P attached to "TEAR" form.
Approving Official	Review expense report for conformance with City travel policy. Verify accuracy of balances and disposition. Approve expense side of "TEAR" form, make a copy for departmental records and submit to A/P in Finance. Highlight amount due to employee or official, if applicable.
Finance	Review for accuracy, signatures and appropriate documentation. File "TEAR" form in employees or official's vendor file and process any payment due if requested.

OVERVIEW

The Travel/Expense Advances & Reimbursements "TEAR" form should be prepared whenever the total estimated cost of travel is more than \$50 or overnight lodging is required.

The "TEAR" form is a two-column form: the left side of the form entitled ADVANCE, provides for approval of the travel, summarizes the cost, and provides documentation for any cash advance to the employee and direct payments to vendors; the right side of the form entitled REIMBURSEMENT, is for reporting actual expenses within ten (10) days after travel is

completed and reconciling. The "TEAR" form is available for City employees or officials to download from the Finance Public Folder in Outlook.

The following highlights key areas of the "TEAR" form:

MEETING AND TRAVEL ADVANCE AND REIMBURSEMENT FORM

The top section of the "TEAR" form contains the following content:

General Information - Identifies who is going and what department and division they work in, the title of the meeting, where the meeting or conference will be held, and which dates the employee will be away for travel. The next section in this area includes the Registration Fee, with a request for back-up information, Who the registration is to be made payable to, the Date the fee is due, and the Account number(s) that will be charged for Training/Seminars, Registration and Supplies.

The left hand section of the "TEAR" form is the ADVANCE section of the form and contains the following:

Account Number(s): Identifies the Travel (Meals, Hotel, and Per Diem) account number or numbers that will be charged.

Transportation: Identifies information of whether you will be using a private vehicle, air fare, city car, and what parking fees are applicable, if any.

Lodging: Identifies how many days your stay will be and what rate per day your lodging will cost. (Remember to call in advance to see if your lodging establishment will honor our "Hotel/Motel Transient Occupancy Tax Waiver Exemption Certificate for Government Agencies" form and fill out your cost information accordingly), and Hotel Name and Address.

Employee Meals (Per Diem Amounts): Identifies the dates and individual meals that are not covered in conference, seminar, meeting, etc. and that the employee will pay for out of the employee's travel advance.

Other: Describe other miscellaneous expenses that are required for travel, such as bridge toll, that will be advanced to the employee/official prior to travel.

Total Travel Advance: This is the total of all anticipated travel expenses to be advanced to the employee/official prior to travel.

Employee's of Official's Signature and Date: Self explanatory.

Supervisor Approved: This is the signature obtained from your Approving Official that authorizes and approves your anticipated travel expenses and advance. Your Department Head must sign in this area as well.

The right hand section of the "TEAR" form is the REIMBURSEMENT section of the form and contains the following:

Transportation: Identifies information of which type of transportation employee/official used for travel, a private vehicle, air fare, city car, and what parking fees are applicable, if any. *Reimbursements traditionally are only used for unexpected travel, or expenses incurred while traveling on pre-arranged business, and should be the exception and not the rule.*

Lodging: Identifies how many days your stay was and what rate per day your lodging cost. *Reimbursements traditionally are only used for unexpected travel, or expenses incurred while traveling on pre-arranged business, and should be the exception and not the rule.*

Employee Meals (Per Diem Amounts): Identifies the dates and individual meals that were required for attendance in a meeting, conference, seminar, etc. and that the employee/official had to pay for out of pocket. *Reimbursements traditionally are only used for unexpected travel, or expenses incurred while traveling on pre-arranged business, and should be the exception and not the rule.*

Other: Describe other miscellaneous expenses that are required for travel, such as bridge toll, that was not advanced to the employee/official prior to travel. *Reimbursements traditionally are only used for unexpected travel, or expenses incurred while traveling on pre-arranged business, and should be the exception and not the rule.*

Amount Due to Employee/City (Circle One): This is the total of all costs less the advance received, if any, which indicates either an amount due or an amount owed to the employee/official at the end of travel.

Supervisor Approved: This is the signature obtained from your Approving Official after your travel is complete, that authorizes and approves your reimbursement for travel expenses. Your Department Head must sign in this area as well.

The bottom section of the "TEAR" form are the Advisories and Statement of Understanding that each employee/official agrees to upon signing the Travel Advance that is very important and reads as follows:

This form shall include the following advisories: All expenses reported on this form must comply with the City's policies relating to expenses and use of public resources. This information submitted on this form is a public record. Penalties for misusing public resources and violating the City's policies include loss of reimbursement privileges, restitution, civil and criminal penalties as well as additional income tax liability.

CITY OF SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

HOTEL/MOTEL TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX WAIVER
EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

DATE: _____

NAME OF HOTEL: _____

ADDRESS OF HOTEL: _____

DATES OF
OCCUPANCY: _____

AMOUNT PAID: _____

GOVERNMENT AGENCY: _____

EXECUTED AT _____, California
City

This is to certify that I, the undersigned, am a representative or employee of the government agency indicated above; that the charges for the occupancy at the above establishment on the dates set forth below have been, or will be paid for by the government agency; and that such charges are incurred in the performance of my official duties as a representative or employee my government agency.

I hereby declare under of perjury that the following statements are true and correct.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY EMPLOYEE NAME: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE: _____

Hotel/Motel Operator: Retain this for your files to substantiate your reports.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT MEETINGS
AND TRAVEL POLICY

This form is used to acknowledge receipt of, and compliance with, the City of South Lake Tahoe Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy.

Procedure

Complete the following steps:

1. Read the Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy.
2. Sign and date the spaces provided below.
3. Return this page only to the Purchasing Manager.

Signature

By signing below, I agree to the following terms:

1. I have received and read a copy of the "Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy.
2. I understand and agree that I must follow all guidelines set forth in this policy to ensure that all AB1234 and internal City Policies are adhered to and abided by throughout my employment with the City of South Lake Tahoe.
3. I agree that I will fill out, sign and submit a Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement form allowing adequate processing time prior to travel.
4. I agree that I will submit my copy of the Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement form to Accounts Payable within ten (10) working days after my return from traveling with all required receipts attached. I understand that I will attach a check for any unused portion of funds advanced, or that I will request a reimbursement as documented by the required itemized receipts attached to my form. Meal tips shall be kept to a maximum of 15%.
5. I agree and understand that all expenses reported on the City's Travel/Expense Advance & Reimbursement form must comply with the Financial Management Meeting and Travel Policy relating to expenses and use of public resources. The information submitted on this form is a public record. Penalties for misusing public resources and violating the City's policies include loss of reimbursement privileges, restitution, civil and criminal penalties as well as additional income tax liability.

Employee/Official's Signature: _____

Employee/Official's Name: _____

Date: _____

Department: _____

Disclaimer: This policy is not a substitute for legal advice. If you have legal questions related to this policy, see your attorney.

EXHIBIT "B"

CURRENT CITY MEETING AND TRAVEL POLICY
Resolution No. 1998-71, Adopted on September 15, 1998

CITY OF SOUTH LAKE TAHOE
RESOLUTION NO. 1998-71
A RESOLUTION ADOPTING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR CITY
TRAVEL

WHEREAS, the City desires to adopt the Financial Management Policy covering travel by City personnel, and;

WHEREAS, staff recommends the attached policy, pages 1 to 5 be accepted as the official travel policy.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City of South Lake Tahoe that the policy be approved.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the South Lake Tahoe City Council on September 15, 1998 by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS H. COLE, BROWN, K. COLE, DAVIS & OSTI

NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS _____

ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBERS _____

Hal Cole, Mayor

ATTEST:

Angela Peterson

ANGELA PETERSON
CITY CLERK



c:/data/gensvcs/accting/tvrires

City of South Lake Tahoe

"making a positive difference now"

TO: Elected Officials
Appointed Officials
Task Force Members
Management Group Employees
City Employees

FROM: Kerry L. Miller, City Manager

DATE: September 4, 1998

RE: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT FOR
MEETINGS, CONFERENCES AND TRAINING

POLICY STATEMENT:

This policy governs reimbursement of expenses incurred in connection with travel and attendance at meetings, conferences and training sessions on behalf of the City of South Lake Tahoe.

This policy, as adopted by resolution of the City Council, applies equally to all elected officials, appointed officials, task force members, management group employees and city employees.

The City will reimburse expenses only for persons in the above positions. This policy establishes the rules for reimbursement to help control the travel cost and to protect the traveling person by delineating appropriate items that can and will be paid for by the City.

It is the intention that this policy be reviewed biannually for any appropriate changes.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

All persons traveling on behalf of the City will seek appropriate economical travel arrangements and lodging accommodations. Whenever feasible, use of discount fares and sharing of accommodations is encouraged.

APPROVALS:

Prior approval is required in all of the following areas:

1. Overnight travel
2. Air Travel
3. Travel Advances
4. Use of rental cars
5. Use of private car on out-of-town business

Office of the City Manager ■ 1052 Tata Lane ■ South Lake Tahoe, California 96150-6324
City Manager (530) 542-6045 ■ Assistant City Manager (530) 542-6048 ■ FAX (530) 542-4054

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - TRAVEL

6. Any travel which constitutes an exception to this policy
7. Council approval is required for travel outside the eleven western states

The following persons have authority to grant required approvals:

1. The Mayor approves for:
 - Elected Officials *
 - Appointed Officials*
 - Task Force Members*
 - City Manager
 - City Attorney

*May be delegated in writing to the City Manager for expenses within the approved annual budget.

2. The City Manager approves for: Management Group Employees
Department Managers
3. Department Managers or Appointing Authority approves for: City Employees

TRAVEL EXPENSE ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

All travel advances or reimbursements will be accounted for using the City of South Lake Tahoe "Meetings/Travel Advances & Reimbursements" form.

Advances:

With approval, the City will advance the full estimated cost of attendance at meetings, conferences and training sessions. The General Services Accounting Division will issue separate checks for lodging, registration or travel when requested.

Requests for advances should be submitted as early as possible. ADVANCE CHECKS WILL BE ISSUES ONLY FOLLOWING THE COUNCIL MEETING DATE PRECEDING THE TRAVEL DATE. Requests for travel not following these procedures will be accounted for on a reimbursement basis only.

If advances are not accounted for within ten days after return, the full amount of the advance will be withheld from the employee's next paycheck. If this occurs, no payment will be made until after the Council meeting which follows receipt of satisfactory expense accounting by the General Services Accounting Division.

Reimbursements:

Accounting for reimbursements will be considered satisfactory if the following documentation is received:

1. Signed, approved travel form

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - TRAVEL

2. Receipts for EVERY claimed expense which is \$25.00 or more (Required by the IRS and California tax laws)
3. Receipts or detailed descriptions of claimed expenses under the \$25.00 limit (obtain receipts wherever possible)
4. Descriptions of names, dates and business purposes of expenses claimed for others (report under "Other" on the travel form)
5. Evidence of refunding to the City of advanced funds which exceed claimed expenses
6. Certificate of trip insurance when using personal auto if the person does not have full time insurance naming the City as additional insured

Travel Advance/Reimbursement Form:

Part A. Transportation Expense:

The City will reimburse the actual cost of public transportation to the meeting, conference or training session. Wherever possible the use of discount fares is encouraged.

With prior approval, the employee or official may use a private auto instead of public transportation. In these instances, reimbursement is strictly limited to the LESSOR of the mileage reimbursement or the costs of a major carrier coach airfare as determined by the General Services Accounting Division. City paid travel time in this instance should not exceed the time required for public transportation.

With prior approval, the employee or official may use a rental car. Persons granting rental car approval should consider the nature of need for the vehicle and the alternative cost of public transportation before granting the approval.

The standard mileage reimbursement rates are established at:

Management Group/City Manager & City Attorney: IRS Rate*

All other Groups: Current authorized IRS Mileage Rate, as published each year by the IRS *

*1998 Rate = \$32.5 per mile

Part B. Lodging Expenses:

The City will reimburse the actual cost of reasonable lodging required for overnight travel. Cost is the base room rate charged plus lodging taxes charged on the occupancy of the room.

All persons incurring overnight lodging costs on behalf of the City will seek lodging accommodations that appropriately minimize the lodging expense without unduly

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - TRAVEL

inconveniencing the City employee. Whenever feasible, sharing of accommodations is encouraged.

The City will reimburse room costs for single room rate only, except where a room is shared resulting in a cost less than single rates. Every attempt should be made to obtain a governmental room rate when booking a reservation.

The following items will not be reimbursed:

1. Lodging costs in private homes
2. Phone calls not strictly related to City business
3. In room television or movie costs
4. Personal expenses

Part C. Meal Costs:

The City will reimburse meal costs at the amounts on the following table:

Breakfast	\$ 7.50
Lunch	10.00
Dinner	<u>18.50</u>

Daily Maximum \$ 36.00

Advances or reimbursement requests will be adjusted to account for meals included in meeting registration fees. Meals included in the registration fee, but not eaten, cannot be claimed for reimbursement under the above schedule.

Also, if a separate charge is made for fixed meals which are integral to a meeting or training session, the City will reimburse the full cost of such a meal.

Part D. Other Costs:

1. Other meal Costs:

The daily meal rates apply to all persons covered by this policy. Meal costs for guest of the City, at a hosted function, with prior approval will be reimbursed, and are subject to reasonable costs only. These meal costs are to be accounted for under "Other" costs on the travel form. Full disclosure as to name, date, purpose and cost must be included in the accounting.

Under no circumstances will wine or bar costs be claimed for reimbursement by the guests or by the employee.

Miscellaneous Costs:

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - TRAVEL

The City will reimburse the cost of miscellaneous expenses at actual cost. Such items are limited to costs directly related to the travel and do not include items viewed as personal in nature. These items have been pre-approved for reimbursements: tips (other than for meals), tolls and parking fees.

P.O.S.T.

Police Department travel reimbursed by P. O .S. T. is excepted from this policy. Such travel is to be in strict compliance with P.O.S.T. regulations.

AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Each department, commission, board or task force MUST submit a training or travel plan with its proposed budget. City Manager and City Council approval of this plan represents proper prior approval for overnight and air travel.

Deviations from the approved plan may only be approved by the City Manager, Department Heads or Appointing Authorities may not approve such deviations.

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**CURRENT CITY MEETING AND TRAVEL POLICY
Resolution No. 1998-71, Adopted on September 15, 1998**

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RESOLUTION NO. 1998-71
A RESOLUTION ADOPTING EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR CITY
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AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS H. COLE, BROWN, K. COLE, DAVIS & OSTI

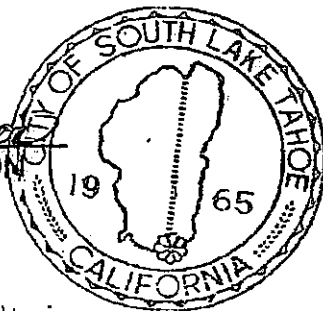
NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS

ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBERS

Hal Cole, Mayor

ATTEST:


ANGELA PETERSON
CITY CLERK



c:/data/gensvcs/accting/tvrires

City of South Lake Tahoe

"making a positive difference now"

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FROM: Kerry L. Miller, City Manager

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - TRAVEL

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY - TRAVEL

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